

March 25, 1975

cut to me. I think it is to you. I first say that most of us have been in a position of trying to find a solution to the problem. We are at the point now where we have a bill that we are ready to introduce tomorrow. We are working with the bill drafter now to get it in shape. We'd like that to be done and we have tentatively set a hearing for April 8th on that particular bill. If that is not the desire and the direction that the Legislature wishes to take, if you wish for that to be delayed, if you wish for a study to be instigated, if you wish for a new bill to be drafted out of the Appropriations Committee, some of the same staff that we use, by the way, that's your business and I think the Legislature ought to make a determination of that. I would say this to you. It is a very complex problem for all of us. I know that many of you have received a great deal of information about it. It is an area that is very sensitive in nature to try to determine what the educational process shall be and the dollars to go with it. I have, personally, tried to cooperate with the Appropriations Committee, with the Governor, with the Attorney General, with the State Department of Education, with the Auditor. We have met with those people on numerous occasions to try to come up with a realistic way to provide funds for special education. We have received a great deal of comment, criticism. I sent a copy of the proposed bill to every school district in the state asking their comments, what the problem was. We called together a group of special education people to let them look over definitions. We have had our budget staff involved. We have had school administrators involved. We have met, at least, four or five times with parent groups. I think we tried to pursue along the line that I thought was reasonable and to arrive at a solution to the problem. But the problem isn't mine. The issue isn't mine. The issue belongs to this body and they have to determine the resolution of the same. If it is your desire and you are displeased with the approaches that we have taken, then I think that we should certainly turn this responsibility over to the Appropriations Committee. If you do not think we are on the right road, if you don't think this is the resolution of the problem, fine. If you agree to that and you want the Appropriations Committee to study it, I would ask for an Executive session of the Education Committee immediately following this meeting and I would ask at that time that we would withdraw our endorsement of introducing the bill and cancelling the hearing that we have available. So, the cards are to you, gentlemen. You determine who you want to do it and, certainly, I will not be offended either way. It is your responsibility and you have to accept it and the problem belongs to all of us and the resolution belongs to all of us. So, Mr. Chairman, with those remarks, I'd ask for the adoption of my amendment.

CLERK: Mr. President, the amendment is as follows: Strike on Page 2, Sec. 2, subs. (1), (2) and (3) and insert the members of the Education Committee. Signed Senator Frank Lewis.

PRESIDENT: The question is, the adoption of the Senator Frank Lewis amendment to the Appropriations Committee's Resolution. For what purpose do you arise?

SENATOR F. LEWIS: An important issue. I think I'd just ask for a Roll Call at the advance so we would have it on